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A FRIEND INDEED.

THERE is an old saying, that "*a friend in need is a friend indeed.*" A hungry man thinks so when he gets a loaf of bread, and the thirsty man, when some one gives him a cup of water. The traveler thinks so, when he has lost his way, and some one tells him which is the right road. The sick man feels the truth of this saying, when he receives a certain cure for his sickness, and the drowning man feels it, when a strong arm draws him out of the water.

This little printed paper comes to you in your need as a friend indeed. Will you welcome its call, and hear what it has to say?

You have two things to care for—your body and your soul. The body needs to be clothed and fed and kept in health, and whatever we do to defile it, or injure it, is sinful. But with all our care it will not last a great while. Most of the trees and houses that we pass every day, will be where they are now, long after our bodies are under ground.

But it is not so with the soul. That will live always. It will live when the trees are all dead, and the houses are all fallen. It will live when the earth and the seas, the moon and the stars, yes, and the sun itself, shall have all passed away!

THE SOUL WILL NEVER CEASE TO LIVE!

Will you think of this, my friend? Your soul is to live always!

God made both our bodies and our souls. You know that everything that is made must have had a maker, and he "who built all things is God." (Acts xvii. 24: Heb. iii. 4.)

God takes care of us every moment. It is in him we live, and move and have our being. (Acts xvii. 28. He gives

us health and food, clothes and friends. Is it not right that we should do what he tells us to do, and try to please him in all things?

In the Holy Scriptures we have his law plainly set before us; and besides that, we have within us a law, written on the heart, which is also the law of God, and which approves of what is right and condemns what is wrong. (Romans ii. 15.)

This holy law requires us to love God with the whole heart, and our neighbor as ourselves. (Mark xii. 29–33.) Is not this a very just and good law? If all men should obey it, would not all men be happy? Just think of it.

But all men have done many things which this good law forbids, and have left undone many things which it requires. So that the Bible truly says, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Romans iii. 23.)

Now we cannot ask to have this good law set aside and made of no account, because it condemns us for our sins. Nor can we ask or expect that our obedience in time to come, will make up for our past sins. A murderer is not pardoned, even among men, just because he promises not to commit murder again. God is just and holy, as well as kind and good, and if we break his law, we must expect he will punish us as he says he will; and we can all see, that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Hebrews x. 31.) We need not fear them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do; but we ought to fear him who, after he hath killed, hath power to destroy both soul and body in hell. (Luke xii. 4, 5; Matthew x. 28.)

Do you not feel in your own heart, that you are not what you ought to be? And do you think, if you should die just as you are, you could be happy with the holy beings that dwell in heaven? And yet you want to be happy. You have a soul that might be happy. If you were holy you would be happy—happy now and happy for ever.

But what can a wicked man do to make himself holy? This is the very thing I have come to tell you. The Son of God came into the world, and having taken upon himself the form of a man, perfectly obeyed God's law, and suffered

the penalty which we deserve for having broken it; and now God is pleased to say, that whosoever repents of his sins, and forsakes them, and believes in Jesus Christ, shall not be punished for his sins, but shall have everlasting life. For Christ's sake, God can and will pardon the most wicked sinner who repents and believes in him. (John iii. 16.) The Holy Spirit is also sent to cleanse us from sin, and make our hearts holy like Christ. (1 Corinthians vi. 11; Titus iii. 5, 6.)

Perhaps you think he will not bestow so great a gift on such an one as you are; but to encourage you to come to him, he likens himself to a father, and tells you that he is more willing to give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him, than earthly parents are to give good things to their children. (Luke xi. 9–13.)

Were you even the chief of sinners, there is a word of encouragement in the sacred Scriptures which is meant for you. The apostle Paul says, "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, OF WHOM I AM CHIEF." (1 Timothy i. 15.)

Now, my friend, you must either cast away your Bible as a book of fables, and be in darkness as much as the heathen are, or you must allow that God is very gracious and merciful, and could not have done more for you than he has done. I beg you then to answer to yourself these four plain questions:—

1. Are you now ready to forsake all your sins, and to do just what God commands you to do?

2. Do you feel your need of strength from God to enable you to keep his commandments?

3. Are you willing to take the Lord Jesus Christ for your only Saviour, and to give up every hope of mercy which does not rest on him?

4. Are you ready to fall down on your knees, and cry out as a poor, perishing creature,

GOD BE MERCIFUL TO ME A SINNER?

God will hear such a prayer, and if it comes from the heart, he will, for Christ sake, blot out your sins, and give you grace to serve and enjoy him for ever.

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CHRIST THE FRIEND OF SINNERS.

One there is, above all others,
  Well deserves the name of Friend;
His is love beyond a brother's,
  Costly, free, and knows no end.

Which of all our friends, to save us,
  Could or would have shed his blood?
But this Saviour died to have us
  Reconciled in him to God.

When he lived on earth abased,
  Friend of sinners was his name;
Now above all glory raised,
  He rejoices in the same.

O! for grace our hearts to soften;
  Teach us, Lord, at length to love;
We, alas! forget too often,
  What a friend we have above.

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